



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

April 16, 2014

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

As you are aware, April 20th will mark four years since the explosion and sinking of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig, which took the lives of 11 individuals and wreaked havoc on our coastal environment and communities. In response to the largest oil disaster in history, we authored and passed the RESTORE Act (P.L. 112-141) in the summer of 2012. While we await a final outcome to the ongoing civil litigation, it is imperative to establish a transparent and efficient process for implementation. As Chair of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council), we respectfully request your leadership to ensure RESTORE Act implementation remains on track.

While we recognize the potential barriers to timely execution of the Act, we still expect the Council to hold itself accountable to the statutory directives, including drafting the rule for the Oil Spill Impact Component and using the restoration priorities as the preeminent guidance to create a project and program list. To that end, we respectfully request that the Council provide a detailed work plan for the remainder of the 2014 calendar year, including key milestones, potential challenges and other actions that could impact the implementation process. An effective, thoughtful plan for the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Trust Fund, as intended by the RESTORE Act, will prevent delay once the outstanding civil claim is resolved.

Throughout the active Deepwater Horizon spill response period, the Administration provided daily briefings to Gulf Coast members and staff, answered questions, and accepted input. This open line of communication between legislators and administrative agencies should continue to maximize the RESTORE Act's intended recovery of the Gulf Coast. Accordingly, we ask that you provide our offices with monthly updates on the status of the work plan, and additional updates as necessary.

We remain confident that coordinated efforts to implement and oversee progress pursuant to the RESTORE Act will yield a robust recovery of the Gulf Coast, and ask for your active support in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Senator Mary Landrieu

Senator Bill Nelson